claim, on the ſcore of modeſty, though her reputation may be white as the driven ſnow, who ſmiles on the libertine whilſt ſhe ſpurns the victims of his lawleſs appetites and their own folly.

Beſides, ſhe has a taint of the ſame folly, pure as ſhe eſteems herſelf, when ſhe ſtudiouſly adorns her perſon only to be ſeen by men, to excite reſpectful ſighs, and all the idle homage of what is called innocent gallantry. Did women really reſpect virtue for its own ſake, they would not ſeek for a compenſation in vanity, for the ſelf-denial which they are obliged to practiſe to preſerve their reputation, nor would they aſſociate with men who ſet reputation at defiance.

The two ſexes mutually corrupt and improve each other. This I believe to be an indiſputable truth, extending it to every virtue. Chaſtity, modeſty, public ſpirit, and all the noble train of virtues, on which ſocial virtue and happineſs is built, ſhould be underſtood and cultivated by all mankind, or they will be cultivated to little effect. And, inſtead of furniſhing the vicious or idle with a pretext for violating ſome ſacred duty, by terming it a ſexual one, it would be wiſer to ſhew

ſhew that nature has not made any difference, for that the unchaſte man doubly defeats the purpoſe of nature, by rendering women barren, and deſtroying his own conſtitution, though he avoids the ſhame that purſues the crime in the other ſex. Theſe are the phyſical conſequences, the moral are ſtill more alarming; for virtue is only a nominal diſtinction when the duties of citizens, huſbands, wives, fathers, mothers, and directors of families, become merely the ſelfiſh ties of convenience.

Why then do philoſophers look for public ſpirit? Public ſpirit muſt be nurtured by private virtue, or it will reſemble the factitious ſentiment which makes women careful to preſerve their reputation, and men their honour. A ſentiment that often exiſts unſupported by virtue, unſupported by that ſublime morality which makes the habitual breach of one duty a breach of the whole moral law.

CHAP.